

SHORT STORIES SERIES

ISSUE: THREE - E

THEME: SHAME AND GLORY

YEARLONG WRITER'S BLOCK

WRITTEN BY: SCOTTY ESCOBAR

12 PAGES — 55"x8.5" — SADDLE STITCHED — CMYK



Yearlong Writer's Block

Written by Scotty Escobar

Notifications from Canvas light up my phone's screen—something about a new assignment, new test, new task. I pick up my phone and scroll through my emails. Nearly two thousand unread emails sitting in my inbox.

So many, I think to myself.

Yesterday, I made a phone call to my sister.

HOW ARE YOU?

she asked. Not knowing what to say, I began stuttering for what felt like an eternity. *Alright*, I finally spat out.

Thing is, I didn't know what I meant by *alright*.

A week ago, I found myself missing an old friend from high school. So I decided to text her even though we hadn't talked in over a year. With a hello and the tap of a send button, my greeting goes. A few moments later, she responds and asks me how I'm doing. I explain that nothing much has changed since we last saw each other. Part of me feels embarrassed though, admitting that I'm still the same lousy, unmotivated person she knew.

She stops replying after a while.

A month ago, I took a break from therapy. Although I didn't have a compelling reason, I felt like I needed to be alone for a while. After a couple of days, I convinced myself that my life didn't matter. After a few missed appointments, my therapist calls me. *Brr-brr, brr-brr*, goes the phone. Guilt bubbles in my throat like cough syrup—bitter and heavy.

Brr-brr, brr-brr.

Today, before the sun came up, I lied in bed for five minutes, or maybe an hour. Huddled under my sheets. Knees tucked against my chest. I kept thinking of my ex-boyfriend. Replaying the few memories I have left of him. Hardly remembering conversations, I replay his image instead. His body's outline. The way my fingertips traced his waist and all of its grooves.

I miss him, still.

And lately, I've just been so sad and I wanna cry but my body won't let me. So I lie down; here, there, anywhere. Wishing I could just cry again.

September 14, 2020

The Short Stories Series is a collaboration with writers to start a zine collection that reflects their writing and give them a platform to distribute their work.

This project is open to the public for submissions, for more information please see www.ezszmz.com/ss

Fonts used:

Noto Serif JP

Minion Pro

Almarai

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EZSZMZ is an independent design firm that amplifies the voices of individuals through printed and digital design solutions.

Thank you for reading!

I asked, "Not knowing what to say, I began stuttering over what I think I call like an eternity. Alright, I'm finally spat by my friend." I found myself missing an old friend from high school. So I decided to text her even though we hadn't talked in over a year. With the tap of a send button, my greeting goes. A few moments later, she responds and asks me how I'm doing. I explain that nothing much happened since we last saw each other. Part of me feels embarrassed though, admitting that I'm still the same lousy, unmotivated person she stops.

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